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RUEHNY/AMEMBASSY OSLO 0062  
RUEHWR/AMEMBASSY WARSAW 0397  
RUEHCD/AMCONSUL CIUDAD JUAREZ 0376  
RUEHIT/AMCONSUL ISTANBUL 0375  
RUEHSO/AMCONSUL SAO PAULO 0369  
RUFOADA/JAC MOLESWORTH AFB UK  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC  
RUCPDO/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHDC  
RHEBAAA/DEPT OF ENERGY WASHINGTON DC  
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC  
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 03 LAGOS 000409

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

STATE FOR AF/W, INR/AA  
WARSAW FOR LISA PIASCIK  
CIUDAD JUAREZ FOR DONNA BLAIR  
ISTANBUL FOR TASHAWNA SMITH  
SAO PAULO FOR ANDREW WITHERSPOON  
OSLO FOR HELENA SCHRADER  
DOE FOR GPERSON, CAROLYN GAY  
TREASURY FOR ASEVERENS, SRENENDER, DFIELD  
COMMERCE FOR KBURRESS  
STATE PASS USTR FOR ASST USTR FLISER  
STATE PASS TRANSPORTATION FOR MARAD  
STATE PASS OPIC FOR ZHAN AND MSTUCKART  
STATE PASS TDA FOR NCABOT  
STATE PASS EXIM FOR JRICHTER  
STATE PASS USAID FOR GWEYNAND AND SLAWAETZ

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/01/2017  
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [PREL](#) [NI](#)  
SUBJECT: VICE PRESIDENT-ELECT GOODLUCK JONATHAN BIO  
INFORMATION

REF: A. SECSTATE 62189

- [1](#)B. LAGOS 325
- [1](#)C. LAGOS 343
- [1](#)D. LAGOS 310
- [1](#)E. ABUJA 786

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Classified By: Consul Alan B. C. Latimer for reasons 1.4 (B) and (D)

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: Bayelsa State Governor Goodluck Jonathan's studied loyalty to his predecessor Diepreye Alamieyeseigha, his humility, and his comparative honesty (by Nigerian standards) are reportedly reasons President Obasanjo chose him as Umaru Yar'Adua's vice presidential running mate. Jonathan claims Ijaw ethnicity and the support of prominent Ijaws, but recent attacks on Government House and his family home while Jonathan was in residence show deep fissures in his south-south support. Jonathan's advisors fear Yar'Adua, who reportedly has not had a close relationship with his deputy governors, will treat Jonathan similarly. End Summary.

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FAMILY LIFE  
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[1](#)2. (C) A native of Otuke in Ogbia Local Government area of Bayelsa State, Goodluck Jonathan comes from a humble social

background. He was born November 20, 1957 to the family of Mr. and Mrs. Ebele Jonathan. Family sources disclosed Jonathan displayed maturity and responsibility in his conduct as a child. These attributes earned him the nickname "Azikiwe" by his paternal grandmother who saw in him leadership qualities similar to late southeast statesman Nnamdi Azikiwe who championed the cause of Nigeria's independence.

13. (C) Jonathan is married to Patience Faka Jonathan, said to have a more forceful personality than her husband. A source in Bayelsa said Mrs. Jonathan "runs her own show and the husband has little or no control over her." She is said to have tremendous influence over Jonathan and his administration. In September 2006, the Economic and Financial Crimes commission (EFCC) seized USD 13.5 million from Mrs. Jonathan at an airport. Reports indicated the money was laundered through an associate; Jonathan managed to distance himself from the deal. The anti-graft commission investigating the source of the money has reported no findings to date. Although Jonathan's name was on the 2006 list of governors accused of corruption, he has not been publicly charged.

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ACADEMIC LIFE AND POLITICAL ASCENT  
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14. (C) Jonathan attended primary school at St. Stephen's in Otuoke and at St. Michael's in Oloibiri, Bayelsa State. He graduated from Mater Dei High School in Imiringi, Bayelsa State in 1975. He obtained a Bachelor of Science Degree in Zoology from the University of Port Harcourt in Rivers State in 1981. He was awarded a Masters of Science degree in Hydrobiology/Fisheries in 1985, and a Doctorate in Zoology in

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1995, from the University of Port Harcourt, Rivers State.

15. (C) Jonathan worked as a Science Inspector of Education in the former Rivers State Civil Service Commission and as an academic in the Biology Department at the College of Education for ten years. He voluntarily resigned his appointment with the college in 1993 to become Assistant Director of Ecology in the defunct Oil Minerals Producing Areas Development Commission (OMPADEC). Jonathan's first political experience came when he was nominated to be Chief D.S.P. Alamieyeseigha's running mate under the People's Democratic Party in the 1999 gubernatorial race. He became Governor of Bayelsa in December 2005 when Alamieyeseigha was arrested and charged for money laundering in the United Kingdom.

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POLITICAL LIFE: JONATHAN AS GOVERNOR  
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16. (C) Jonathan served as Governor of Bayelsa State for 18 months. Often referred to as a humble politician, Jonathan reportedly listens to his advisors, many of whom were friendly towards the United States. Jonathan has engaged U.S. diplomats and the international community on numerous occasions, including during hostage crises and to ask for advice or assistance on economic development issues. Jonathan's advisors have visited the consulate's Foreign Commercial Service office to seek out U.S. sources of training and materials. Jonathan will likely remain accessible as Vice President and willing to continue exchanges with U.S. diplomats. Jonathan attended a short seminar on Public Policy and Governance at Harvard's JFK School of Government in late April.

17. (C) It is not clear how Jonathan views Nigeria's role as an international or regional power. Jonathan may accept international input and assistance in addressing the issues of the Niger Delta but would rely on Yar'Adua's lead and on

the advice of close advisors. We have no indication of his position towards counterterrorism.

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BAYELSA POLITICS AS USUAL  
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¶18. (C) Jonathan worked closely with Secretary to the Bayelsa State Government Dr. Godknows Igali, tagged to be his Special Presidential Advisor on the Niger Delta, during hostage crises. During the 2007 elections, an interlocutor suggested Jonathan was trying to manipulate militants into abstaining from electoral violence through a "divide and conquer" strategy. That strategy may have backfired; one interlocutor suggests the April 20 attack on Government House was masterminded by senior militants upset the government was trying to win the support of their subordinates. However, another interlocutor reports this attack may have been instigated by Delta Governor James Ibori, jealous that Jonathan received the PDP's nomination for Vice President. Militants have said that they attacked the residence because rigging was taking place there.

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LEADERSHIP STYLE AND VIEWS ON DISSENT  
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¶19. (C) Jonathan's inner circle is primarily composed of Bayelsa State indigenes, some with prior government experience, others active in civil society. Jonathan's demeanor is reserved. In a recent meeting he listened to others and spoke only when he drew the meeting to a close with his own comments. In our experience, he does not veer far from the party line.

¶110. (C) Jonathan's defining characteristic is loyalty. When his former boss was arrested in London, Jonathan was reluctant to take over as governor or to appear too eager to fill his superior's shoes. He waited until he was compelled by the presidency to claim the governorship. Jonathan still supports the Alamieyesiegha family. It is his loyalty that likely compelled President Obasanjo to select him as Yar'Adua's running mate, perhaps to forestall the type of conflict Obasanjo perceived himself to have experienced with Atiku.

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POPULAR SUPPORT  
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¶111. (C) Jonathan's ascent to the Vice Presidency is a source of pride for many Ijaws and he has the support of prominent (although marginalized) Ijaw elders such as E.K. Clark. However, his appointment as Yar'Adua's running mate earned him political enemies. Attacks on Jonathan's campaign offices, Government House, and family home have not been linked definitively to individuals or groups, they reflect deep fissures in his south-south support base. He is unknown outside of this region, however.

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JONATHAN: RELATIONS WITH YAR'ADUA AND THE MILITARY  
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¶112. (C) When not campaigning with Yar'Adua, Jonathan spent much of his time in Bayelsa. He and Yar'Adua are not known to consult with one another on a regular basis. Jonathan's advisors fear Yar'Adua, who reportedly has not had a close relationship with his Deputy Governors, will treat Jonathan similarly. As a result, they believe that Yar'Adua will have to involve himself personally in resolution of the Niger Delta crisis. Others, however, suggest their academic backgrounds will make it easy for the two to work together.

¶13. (S) Jonathan does not have extensive ties to the military establishment, but is close to the Chief of Army Staff, General Andrew Azazi, a fellow Ijaw Christian.

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